

REPORT

On the petition of colonel de Vienne, accompanied with a bill making provision for his claim.

DECEMBER 11, 1818.

Read twice, and committed to a committee of the whole House on the "bill making provision for the claim of M. Poiry," &c.

The select committee, to whom was referred the petition of M. de Vienne, respectfully

REPORT—

That the facts stated by the petitioner, are briefly the following, viz: That he held the commission of captain in the French cavalry, in the year 1777, and having first consulted Dr. Franklin, agent for the United States in France, he resigned that commission, in order to join the armies of the United States, then contending in the cause of liberty and independence; that being in the enjoyment of an easy fortune, he refused to accept any advance in money from Dr. Franklin, which would have placed him on a par with the herd of mercenaries who sought the service of the United States, only to obtain money. He embarked from Quiberon bay, and arrived at Boston, in May 1778, after a tedious passage of one hundred and four days, bearing all his own expenses. His first services were rendered by assisting colonel Armand, who was then engaged in forming a legion. He afterwards proceeded to join general De La Fayette, under the immediate command of general Washington, whose army was then encamped at Valley Forge. He there acted as volunteer and aid-de-camp to general De La Fayette, without pay or appointments: being on a reconnoitering party on the morning of the affair of Monmouth, he had the good fortune to make prisoners several Scotch grenadiers, and delivered them to general Washington. M. de Vienne was sent the day after that battle to Philadelphia, as bearer of despatches to the President of Congress, and received, from that honorable body, in consequence of the recommendatory letters he carried to them, the rank of lieutenant

colonel. He continued to serve in that rank, throughout the active campaign of 1778, during seven months; for which service colonel de Vienne refused to receive either pay or compensation of any kind for himself or attendants; and he thus sacrificed, without regret, the sum of at least twenty-four thousand francs to have the glory and honor, (as he expresses it) of serving the United States. His health having suffered from his fatigues, he re-embarked in the month of November, with Monsieur D'Estaing, in a frigate bound to the West Indies.

Subsequent events, connected with the French revolution, have reduced colonel de Vienne, to a state of dependence upon a small pension granted by the king of France, to support himself and family. Old, infirm, and poor, he now asks to be paid for services which, when rich, he rendered gratuitously.

Original certificates from general Washington and from general De La Fayette, amply substantiating the principal facts above stated, and testifying to the zeal and bravery of colonel de Vienne, the committee beg leave, to report a bill herewith for his relief.